

IN THE CLAIMS:

What is claimed is:

1. (Currently amended) A method, comprising:

providing a usage monitoring heating ventilation and air conditioning control system, the usage monitoring heating ventilation and air conditioning control system including a programmable digital thermostat with an on board memory;

issuing personal identification numbers to each of a plurality of system users;

associating each of the plurality of system users with at least one of a plurality of user types;

storing the personal identification numbers in a first data structure in the on board memory; and

linking each one of a plurality of entries in the first data structure by reference to at least one of a plurality of entries in a second data structure in the on board memory, the second data structure including a list of user types; and

recording and accruing usage monitoring heating ventilation and air conditioning control system usage data in the on board memory of the programmable digital thermostat according to each of the plurality of system users' personal identification numbers,

wherein hours of additional usage monitoring heating ventilation and air conditioning control system usage for each of the plurality of system users is accrued in the on board memory of the programmable digital thermostat according to each user's personal identification number.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein each of the plurality of user types is associated with at least one of a plurality of function sets.
3. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the on board memory ~~can~~ includes a member selected from the group consisting of electrically erasable programmable read only memory, flash memory, and random access memory.
4. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:
dynamically updating the first data structure; and
dynamically updating the second data structure.
- 5-27. Canceled
28. (Currently amended) A method, comprising
regulating user access to an interactive user interface of a programmable thermostat, each user identified by a personal identification number associated with a user type selected from the group consisting of building owners, maintenance personnel, building tenants, and manufacturers; and
recording and accruing usage monitoring heating ventilation and air conditioning control system usage data in an on board memory of the programmable thermostat according to each user's personal identification numbers,
wherein hours of additional usage monitoring heating ventilation and air conditioning control system usage for each of the plurality of system users is accrued in the on board

memory of the programmable digital thermostat according to each user's personal identification number.

29. (Original) The method of claim 28, wherein each user's personal identification number belongs to exactly one user type.

30. (Previously presented) The method of claim 28, wherein access to the interactive user interface of the programmable thermostat is regulated using at least one of a plurality of software filters.